

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

UNCLAS DHAKA 000517

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [ECON](#) [SNAR](#) [AFIN](#) [BG](#)

SUBJECT: BANGLADESH: 2003/2004 END USE MONITORING REPORT

REF: STATE 17655

1. In response to reftel, American Embassy Dhaka is pleased to provide the following information regarding end use of INL-provided assistance in Bangladesh.

2. Procedures: Forensics Advisor Howard Dobres visited the testing laboratory operated by the Department of Narcotics Control (DNC) in Dhaka, examined the equipment, and questioned laboratory personnel on the use of each piece of equipment. The DNC lab technicians were cooperative and helpful but the Lab Director was inattentive and seemed irritated by the visit.

3. Status: In July 2000, post turned over to the DNC an analytical balance, top-loading balance, and polarizing microscope for use in their newly constructed narcotics testing laboratory. The Bangladesh courts have accepted the lab's results as bona fide evidence in narcotics cases. All items provided by ICITAP are generally kept clean, in good working order, and stored within a secure building and compound. Machinery that is understood by the lab chemists is being used for its intended purpose. However, some equipment is outside the chemists' technical training and so stands unused. During our meetings with the lab staff and the Director General (DG) of the DNC, alternatives for training on the equipment were discussed which included using local professors from the University of Dhaka to help train DNC staff on proper usage of certain lab equipment. This would be in lieu of additional training provided by ICITAP's Forensic Advisor on his trips to Bangladesh approximately every four months.

4. Problems: The DG of the DNC appears to be energetic and proactive, but his department, including the laboratory facilities, suffers from severe budgetary constraints. As of the December visit by Howard Dobres, lab chemists had not been paid for six months. Aside from the equipment provided in 2000, there is little more that the chemists have to work with. The lab itself is very poorly cleaned and maintained and lacks temperature control, refrigeration facilities, and proper ventilation, including in the rooms where the ICITAP-provided equipment is stored. Basic items such as voltage stabilizers and Uninterrupted Power Supplies (UPS) do not exist. The absence of these items places equipment at undue risk of electrical damage or failure. In addition, field communications, field testing, and sophisticated narcotics analysis capacity are seriously lacking.

5. Impact: Samples referred to the drug lab continued to increase in 2004. The support thus far provided by ICITAP, while useful, has not had a significant impact on improving the quality of the lab's work or its efficiency. It appears that this is largely due to the extent of the problems at the lab and the lack of ability of the lab technicians to use the more sophisticated analysis equipment. These factors make assistance provided at the current level inconsequential. Simple changes would improve the situation, but they must come from the DNC or elsewhere in the Government of Bangladesh (BDG).

6. Program Changes: To help address these challenges, a Letter of Agreement (LOA) on Narcotics Control and Law Enforcement was signed in 2002 between the USG and the BDG to provide equipment and training. An ICITAP team visited the DNC's drug lab in June 2003 to evaluate needs and provide recommendations. In addition, an amendment to the original LOA (April 2004), which will provide USDOJ/ICITAP training to address police professionalism, internal corruption, and forensic investigations, is underway with the Bangladesh National Police. The USDOJ/ICITAP Program Manager is currently conducting the training associated with the LOA and thus far has trained approximately 220 Bangladesh Police Officers in related courses. The DG of the DNC, recently informed of the state of affairs at the testing lab, has stated his intention to check more regularly on the operations of the laboratory and to see that staff are paid.

THOMAS